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MUSIC IN 1897.

IF the making of music in London during the year that has passed is compared to the music that lovers of the art could hear in 1837, there is every reason for genuine jubilation. Even if the comparison be made between now and ten years ago the progress would seem to be prodigious. But though we have cause to congratulate ourselves on the growth of the taste for music, the optimist who, from a superficial view of matters musical, raises a pean to the heavens, should be told a few things salutary for him to know. He may point with pride to the enormous number of concerts that have taken place during 1897, both in the season proper and the autumn season; he may boast of the fifty concerts a week under the burden of which the London critic has groaned; he may enthusiastically refer to what looks like a *renaissance* of the taste for opera; but, as the poet says, "all is not as it seems." Certainly one of the features of modern musical life in London, and England generally, is the taste for orchestral concerts. During the year we have supported the Philharmonic, the Richter, the Queen's Hall Symphony, and the Promenade Orchestral Concerts as fixtures, and in addition we have had visits from Felix Mottl and Lamoureux; also, it must be added, the Philharmonic Society has given an autumn season. Put in that way it would seem as if London could not have too many orchestral concerts; but the damping question must be asked, "How many of these concerts really pay?" They are not wanting who foresee that orchestral concerts have been overdone in London; who complain that while a Mottl or a Richter attracts large audiences the other concerts are but poorly supported. The pessimist who draws unfavourable conclusions from this fact is, however, as wrong as the optimist who will not, or cannot, look below the surface. It may be assumed that London with its millions of inhabitants can easily support even more orchestral concerts than we have had during 1897. The assumption is not rash so far as the concerts themselves are concerned; but events have shown that this number of orchestral entertainments cannot continue to be given unless a radical reduction of price be made. All conductors have not the same drawing power, but all

have a drawing power at a price. At present the sums charged for seats are far beyond what the ordinary middle-class music-lover can afford if he is to attend concerts as often as he is now asked to do. For some inscrutable reason certain conductors have a fashionable vogue; while others equally good, and in some cases even better, are obliged to make their bow to upholstery pathetically visible to the naked eye. It is of no use quarrelling with Fashion; her dictates are imperial, and must be obeyed. This state of things, during the coming year, may undergo a wholesome change. One manager, at least, is contemplating a radical innovation, by which good seats at his orchestral concerts will be within the limits of quite slenderly lined pockets. The experiment, if made, will be extremely interesting; for it will practically sound the tocsin of a revolution in concert matters.

If successful, the revolution will spread to recitals of all kinds. At present concert-giving is a musical farce. The state of things described in an article entitled the "Piano Microbe," which appeared a few months ago in these columns, was no exaggeration, although the tone of the article was fantastic. Good pianists—nay, pianists of exceptional attainments—do not make a penny by their recitals, but rather have to pay many a penny for the privilege of exploiting their talents. In the case of those who desire to get together a teaching connection, the money thus disbursed is money well spent; but there are many *virtuosi*, well worth hearing for their own sakes, who could draw audiences at a low price, but at present cannot fill a hall with anything but "paper." The cry of "*égalité!*" in the French Revolution fascinated the mob and flattered the levelling instinct of mediocrity; but the ideal did not work, and never has worked in human affairs. There is, however, one emperor in the pianist world—Paderewski. His price, which is paid, is a guinea for each stall; the other pianists, D'Albert, Sauer, Lamond, and Busoni, are democratically classed with the latest *débutante* of the keyboard as far as price is concerned. It is doubtful, even, if great artists such as have been named do not charge too much for seats at their recitals. Certain it is that their audiences are largely composed of "dead-heads." The system is ridiculous, and if the revolution about to begin with orchestral concerts extend to

concerts of all descriptions, there will, perhaps, be more reason for optimism in reviewing music in 1898 than there is in writing of the art during the past year. It must be insistently urged, indeed, that there is a great deal that is rotten in the state of music.

The present love for orchestral music apparently has had one bad effect, viz. the number of oratorio performances in London is becoming beautifully less each year. This fact may be due, of course, to a decline of interest in that form of art; but here again it cannot be said that London amateurs do not care for oratorio *at a price*. But prices in the case of oratorio cannot be reduced while such large fees are paid to the principal singers, and the London amateur will not accept any but the finest singers. There was a time when oratorio could be made to pay; now hardly a concert-manager will touch it at his own risk. Some of us lay this state of things at the door of orchestral concerts attracting money which otherwise would be spent in oratorio; others affirm that oratorio itself has become unfashionable. There is probably some truth in both views; but more in that of the high fees charged by celebrated singers.

The last few years have been remarkable for the growth of a love for Wagner's music, and 1897, in this respect, has eclipsed even its predecessors. In addition to Wagner, there has been a kind of vogue for music of the modern Russian school of Rimsky-Korsakow, Balakirew and Glazounov. The interest taken in these composers, who owned César Cui and Borodine as their leaders, is due to the sudden popularity of Tschaikowsky, who himself did not belong to the Russian school, but whose works, in a less degree than theirs, it is true, do most certainly reflect Russian national characteristics. In addition to compositions of the modern Russian school, we have had a surfeit of symphonic-poems by Dvorák, Richard Strauss, Liszt, Tschaikowsky, and others. The lovers of classical music deplore this modern tendency of "programme" compositions, and perhaps rightly; but it would be more just to recognise that these modern composers are pushing forward on new paths, and, consequently, their efforts, however detrimental they may seem to musical art, should not be judged with rash harshness. Wagner, who, with Brahms, may be looked upon as the last of the great classical composers, has been censured as the father of the modern programme school, although, in his prose works, he protested over and over again against music of the programme description; but the reactionists are not likely to discriminate between those who are responsible and those who are not for a state of things which seems to them to be deplorable. That such a reaction has begun is evident enough. The composer Grieg has counselled a return to the method of Mozart, and that counsel of perfection, or otherwise, according to our individual tastes, has been echoed in many quarters. It is very likely, indeed, that a fashion for Mozart and Haydn will set in with some severity; but it cannot be a fashion that will last, for the most ardent lover of "classical" music must admit that the art has developed since Mozart's day, and that, in short, we cannot, if we would, put back the clock of time. Such reactions may do good, however, and they certainly cannot do harm, since no composer of any genius allows himself to be led by fashion, and the mere striver after eccentricity may find his audience gone. For which consummation many of us will be thankful.

Side by side with the modern love of orchestral music is an awakened interest in chamber music when performed by parties of instrumentalists so long accustomed to play together that perfection of *ensemble* is obtained. A couple of years ago the Kneisel Quartet showed London

musicians what could be done in this respect, and since then we have had the Bohemian String Quartet and the Joachim Quartet. The visits of these instrumentalists have made the amateur more and more dissatisfied with what may be called the "scratch" quartet parties with which we had at one time to be satisfied; and the success of these foreigners has given an impetus to quartet-playing in London and to the formation of quartet parties—from which fact some good may spring in due season.

The one branch of art that has not kept pace with the others is—opera. The ordinary Covent Garden season is now part of the creed of fashion, and, except on Wagner nights or exceptional occasions, is not supported at all by the genuine lover of music. Two attempts have been made to popularize operas performed in English. First we had Mr. Hedmond's short and disastrous season at Her Majesty's; and then the Carl Rosa Company's visit at Covent Garden; but the comparative ill success of both these seasons hardly proves that there is no public in London for opera performed in English. Mr. Hedmond pinned his faith on Franco Leon's *Rip Van Winkle*, a work of some merit and more faults, and the Carl Rosa Company attempted too much in giving a provincial season at the same time as their visit to the metropolis. The London amateur demands perfection; he has been spoilt by hearing the finest artists and orchestras in the world, and he will not be content with much less than the best. But it is not only in performances and financial success that opera has stood still; for even in composition there seems a lull. The cleverest composers, both in England and the Continent, have not addressed themselves to the composition of opera, nor, when they have done so, have they been most successful. Here in London we have heard Kienzl's *Der Evangelimann*, a work that owns Wagner as its father but proved to be a weakly child; Puccini's *La Bohème* did not justify the eulogistic rumours that heralded its performance; Bruneau's *Messidor* has not yet been performed in England, but, from all accounts, it has not advanced the composer's reputation; D'Albert's *Gernot* only achieved a *succès d'estime*. An exception, however, must be made in favour of Vincent d'Indy's *Fervaal*—produced at Brussels in March—for those who have heard it speak of it as a very considerable composition. Our own composers have been just as unsuccessful in operas. MacCunn's *Diarmid* is an advance on *Jeannie Deans*, but it cannot be said to be a success; and Sir Alexander Mackenzie's *His Majesty* ran for a comparatively short time. Apart from the operas that have come to light not being striking, they show that the operatic art is in the doldrums, and but for more consistency and for more importance being given to the orchestra, Wagner might just as well have never written his later works, so far as his influence is felt in modern music-dramas. His one great innovation, the weaving of the whole texture of the music from representative themes, has been followed by no single composer, unless it be Humperdinck and Richard Strauss (in his *Guntram*). Operatic composition may be said to be at a stand still at present. Perhaps Wagner has not yet been assimilated. His music-dramas, however, are now known to all the world, even to Paris, where the *Meistersinger* was at last produced (on November 10th), and in London the one healthy operatic feature has been the support accorded to the Bayreuth master at Covent Garden. Short of Wagner, the demand has been for light opera, a demand that can be so little supplied by our own composers that *The Grand Duchess* has had to be staged at the Savoy Theatre as a stop-gap. The other "comic-operas" produced in London do not deserve notice.

However pessimistic we may be about the financial support accorded to concerts, it must be admitted that there has been much activity in the musical world, especially so far as British compositions and executants are concerned. The year has seen many works by native composers that can hold their own with those produced abroad. Dr. Parry's *Theme and Variations* performed at a Philharmonic concert on June 3rd; Professor Stanford's *Requiem*, produced at the Birmingham Festival; and Edward German's *Hamlet* symphonic-poem, also a Birmingham work, are three compositions of which we may well be proud. Sir Arthur Sullivan has not done much, his Alhambra Jubilee Ballet not being quite worthy of his talent; but as he is engaged on a cantata for the Leeds Festival this year, it is to be hoped we shall soon have another work from his pen equal to the *Golden Legend*. Mr. Cowen's "Idyllic" symphony was not a highly interesting work. Two new English pianists must be mentioned—Miss Gertrude Peppercorn and Miss Elsie Hall, who won the Mendelssohn scholarship in Germany. Another British pianist, Frederick Lamond, has established himself in the favour of London amateurs. Of foreign pianists who have visited us, the most noticeable are Signor Busoni, Mlle. Pancera, Herr Liebling, and Herr Gabrilowitsch. It is satisfactory to find there is not the same worship of prodigies as there used to be. The year has been marked by the advent of only one child-pianist of any pretensions, Bruno Steindel, and he, although as wonderful as any of the former prodigies, has excited nothing like the same interest.

During the year we have received visits from several celebrated foreign composers, notably Grieg, Moszkowsky, Humperdinck, and Glazounow, all of whom conducted works of their own at the Philharmonic Concerts. Foreign conductors have been well represented, too. Mottl and Lamoureux are now features of London musical life. Among the more important foreign compositions produced have been César Franck's *Le Chasseur Maudit*, Richard Strauss's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and *Tod und Verklärung*, symphonic-poems, Böellmann's Symphony in F, Tschaikowsky's *Francesca da Rimini* (first performed at Cambridge some ten years ago), Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, Humperdinck's music to the *Children of the King*, Paul Gilson's *La Mer*, and Glazounow's 4th and 5th Symphonies. The new operas have already been mentioned. There is nothing fresh to be said of the musical festivals, except that the Birmingham Festival was the most successful meeting that has been held for years, although the chorus was not as satisfactory as might be expected, owing either to the low pitch or want of rehearsal with the orchestra, or to both. The Handel Festival, on the other hand, was not as well attended as usual. Speaking of festivals, it is necessary to chronicle the fact that the Bayreuth performances, in many ways, were below the standard naturally expected.

The harvest of death has been heavy. The severest loss to the musical world was the passing away of Johannes Brahms on April 3rd, after a long and painful illness. Many prominent English musicians have died during the year, among whom may be mentioned Dr. Garrett, W. T. Best, Dr. William Spark, Berthold Tours, T. E. Mann, A. J. Caldicott, and H. C. Banister. Of foreign musicians death has claimed Waldemar Bargiel, A. W. Thayer, Paul Pabst, Otto Günther, Böellmann, Karl Bendel, and Bazzini.

Several weaknesses in the musical world of to-day have been pointed out in the course of this article; but, when all is said, it must be admitted that music has made great strides in Great Britain during the last few years, and that 1897 has been a forward and not a backward step.

There is, too, every reason to hope that 1898 will see a still further advance.

TRANSCRIPTIONS.

(A continuation of "New Lamps for Old.")

BY FRANKLIN PETERSON, MUS. BAC. OXON.

WE now approach the difficult question of how far the original score of a composer may be altered in the process of transcription. There is a certain school of purists which holds that no music should be transcribed; that if a composer left a song, a symphony, or an opera, no one has any right to publish or perform anything but the original. It is beyond the scope of this article to seek to justify Liszt's transcriptions of Schubert's songs. (Does anyone who has heard Rubinstein play the "Erlkönig," or who knows "Auf dem Wasser zu singen," "Ständchen," or Mendelssohn's "Auf Flügeln des Gesanges," require any justification?) And surely no exception can be taken to those faithful transcriptions for the pianoforte of orchestral and larger works, to which we are indebted for a great part of our intimate acquaintance with them. What delightful hours every musical amateur has spent over Peters' or Augener's duet arrangements of symphonies, overtures, etc., and Novello's or Boosey's piano scores of oratorios and operas!

But in presenting an organ or orchestral composition as pianoforte transcription, it is necessary that the writer try to suggest by all means at his disposal the effects which are peculiar to the original instrument and more or less foreign to the pianoforte. The very first mention of this subject recalls the memory of Liszt, the great hero and the great sinner. It is a shame, however, to lay on Liszt all the blame which attaches to those who incur just condemnation. If Liszt threw open to the concert pianist the door of Bach's organ works, he never closed it on Bach's pianoforte works. And yet we may see programme after programme of recitals by great artists who so often nowadays give Bach's name the place of honour, and we shall only find "Bach-Liszt," "Bach-Tausig," "Bach-D'Albert," never the C sharp minor, E flat minor, B flat minor, B minor, of Book I., or the D sharp minor, E major, E minor, F sharp minor, G minor, G sharp minor, or B flat minor of Book II.—works as grand and noble as any of the organ works. They are not difficult enough, perhaps, and do not place their exponent on a high enough platform! Shame on you, pianists. It was not from the great master Liszt you learned this neglect of the "pianist's Bible," nor from Rubinstein nor Bülow.

The recollection of a performance of the minor organ fugue suggests a partial modification of so sweeping and so well-deserved a condemnation. I once heard Paderewski play the fugue in question as a pianoforte conception. There was no organ thunder, no crashing of chords, no pride of life and conscious strength; all was quietness, sweetness, and gentleness; and as the theme was given out with a new poetry and a new charm, the attention was arrested and the aesthetic pleasure afforded to the hearer lasted unabated to the close. Yet it was not the work we know; and there were many pianoforte fugues which would have rewarded the same treatment even more generously. In spite of all the pleasure the artist gave, they did well who declined to exchange the old lamp for the beautiful new one.

How can the puny pianoforte hope to rival the great organ? How can a weak hand hold the reins of Sol's chariot or grasp the thunderbolts of Jove? Compare the dignity of the G minor Fantasia as it sounds on the organ

with the fussy, self-important, and entirely inadequate effect it has on the pianoforte.

The mania for making everything as difficult as possible has a great deal to answer for, from the time of Liszt onwards.

"When he (Lenz, who was playing one of Chopin's mazurkas to the composer) came to a passage in which Liszt had taught him to introduce a *volata* through two octaves, Chopin whispered blandly, 'This trait is not your own; am I right? He has shown it you—he must meddle with everything.'"

In the case of Liszt and other giants of the pianoforte, these added touches are often the mere exuberance of phenomenal technique; but, unfortunately, the pupils and imitators seek to incorporate them in the original works—to the almost invariable detriment of the composition and certainly unwarrantable disrespect to the composer. The most flagrant outrage is, perhaps, Tausig's "Weber's Invitation."

It would be ridiculous to assert that Liszt's Rhapsodies and Transcriptions had technical difficulties in themselves as any important part of their aim. Successful experiments in, and wonderful extension of pianoforte technique they undoubtedly are, making exhaustive demands upon the pianist's fingers, but many of them find their proper place in the study and during the hour for private practice, not in the concert-room. Who would include in a pianoforte recital programme the "Andante" from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony—however skilfully the arrangement has been made?

When discussing Liszt's transcriptions, due weight must be given to one consideration beyond the surpassing success he has achieved in this field. For he, the greatest writer for the pianoforte, is of inferior rank as a composer, and is often most successful when other people give him subjects. Consequently, when a selection is made from his works for the purpose of public performance, transcriptions occupy a large proportion. And when the lamp is so old and worn out as the *Masaniello Tarantelle*, we gratefully accept Liszt's nice new one—and wish we could play it! We do not barter our loved Schubert songs for Liszt's arrangements when we assign these a high place in the pianist's répertoire; nor is our desire to hear the pathetic last scene from *Tristan* in its proper setting in any degree lessened by unfeigned delight in and admiration for Liszt's transcription. And he would be a purist gone mad who could raise any objection to Liszt's use of the national melodies of his own country in these magnificent "Hungarian Rhapsodies." Clearly then, on all counts, Liszt's transcriptions are to be judged apart.

If the pianoforte has usurped the place and appropriated much of the literature of the orchestra, the latter has taken its revenge on the literature of the pianoforte and other smaller instruments. Of necessity, the revenge is very incomplete, and the results have been poor, in spite of several notable and successful efforts.

Some of these transcriptions have been made as studies in orchestration. A favourite and a valuable exercise given to beginners and students is the scoring for quartet, or for small or large orchestra, a movement from the classics—usually a slow movement; and when we remember that the second movement of Beethoven's first pianoforte sonata (Op. 2, No. 1), contains a transcription of part of the adagio from an early quartet, we can hardly condemn an attempt to re-score it for strings.

But a study or an experiment must be of outstanding success and importance before it can claim the attention of the public, and hope to be included in programmes of orchestral concerts. And it is doubtful whether Esser's

clever orchestration of Bach's Passacaglia—one of the most successful of the class now under consideration—has any right to be considered a legitimate addition to any serious programme. On a very different level stands Berlioz' transcription of Weber's "Invitation." This is no experiment by a student, but a perfect study from the skilled hand of perhaps the greatest master of the orchestra we have yet seen. The circumstances which led to its production tend to lift it above the reproach it is so easy to cast at any one who tampers with a classic of such absolute perfection as Weber's composition; and the brilliant success Berlioz has scored may cover a few if not a multitude of musical sins. When *Der Freischütz* was produced in Paris in 1841, Berlioz fought tooth and nail for the integrity of the score, and with no little pride he writes: "La partition du *Freischütz*, grâce à mon insistance, fut exécutée intégralement et dans l'ordre exact où l'auteur l'a écrite." But the directors of the opera, in deference to the expectations of their public, insisted on having a ballet as usual, and they actually proposed to Berlioz that he should mix up for the purpose the "Ball Scene" from his "Symphonie Fantastique" with the "fête" from his *Romeo et Juliette*! There was nothing for it: Berlioz had to supply a ballet; but he stuck loyally to his idol, Weber, and eked out selections from the dance music in *Preciosa* and *Oberon* with his famous orchestral transcription of the "Invitation."

It is of course the greater possibilities an orchestra offers of tone, colour, and contrast, which tempts the arranger; and when Mendelssohn's "Lied ohne Worte," commonly called the "Spinning Song," is committed to the deft fingers of the violinists and the delicate treatment of wood-winds; when Beethoven's "Funeral March" from the A flat Sonata is given by a fine military band amid all the gorgeous pomp of a soldier's funeral; when the mad revelry of a Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody is tossed from side to side of a first-rate orchestra, it is difficult to insist on rigid canons of purism.

A few of the transcriptions which fall under this first description of studies bear their own condemnation on their face. It was very clever of the arranger of Bach's G minor organ fugue to provide an accompanying chorale for the trombones, but surely monuments of art may be spared the indignity of having advertisements pasted or painted on their calm beauty, however alluring the huge side of a pyramid or the perfect façade of a Parthenon.

There are many instances of a composer transcribing his own work for orchestra, either in order to use up valuable material (possibly sometimes even to save time and trouble!), or to admit of the enlargement of an idea or its treatment. A standing and most voluminous example is Handel, who freely transcribed earlier works by himself or others with fine impartiality and conspicuous success; and the composer's extraordinary facility only adds incomprehensibility to the mystery.

It is otherwise with most of Bach's transcriptions. He also makes free use of material from his own earlier works, but only seldom for the purpose of rescuing pieces from "occasional" compositions which had followed their "occasion" into oblivion. The Christmas Oratorio is the one work which contains a large proportion of such compositions. No fewer than three choruses, seven arias, and one duet at least were taken bodily from earlier works;† and those who know "Come and thank Him," "Prepare thyself, Zion," and "Slumber, Beloved," must wonder at the extraordinary success of the union between the music and its new words.

* Niecks, "Life of Chopin," vol. ii., p. 137.

† "À Travers Chants."

† Spitta's Bach, vol. ii., p. 573, ff.

But Bach's transcriptions are almost invariably enlargements of the original idea or its treatment. The most interesting examples are to be found in the arrangements he made of his violin sonatas as clavier or organ pieces, the Prelude to the E major violin Suite as an orchestral-organ introduction to a Cantata, etc.

Professor Prout has drawn my attention to two examples of what he appropriately enough calls "Bach's miraculous power." One is where the composer has taken a chorus from the cantata "Halt' im Gedächtniss," and written entirely different voice parts to the florid orchestral accompaniment to serve as the "Gloria" of the Mass in A. The other is still more wonderful, where to the first movement of the third "Brandenburg" concerto, already in ten parts, he has added five additional parts (two horns and three oboes), for the symphony in the cantata, "Ich liebe den Höchsten."

The same marvellous skill places Bach's transcriptions of Vivaldi's concertos on a platform of their own in the history of musical literature. Nineteen in number, they were executed as studies in the "concerto" form of the Italian school; and it is very interesting even only to read Spitta's description of Bach's treatment and its results,* getting thereby a glimpse, however hazy, of the process which transformed compositions of very moderate musical value into such masterpieces of form and musical content.

The last instances of transcription which demand our attention open the volume of musical history at one of its saddest pages. For there is little doubt that had Schubert been able to command the means necessary for the production of orchestral works, several of his more important pianoforte duets would have found their fitting vehicle in the more complete instrument with its wealth of resource. The pious hands which have tried to make good what poverty, disease, and death robbed the world of, may be forgiven if Süssmayer was not Mozart, and if neither Barnett (who completed the E major symphony), nor Joachim (who scored the great pianoforte Duo), was Schubert.

This brings us in sight of the subject of modern editions of older works, and commentaries, or suggested improvements in details which might have escaped the composer's notice, made by recognized authorities. The subject, however, must be left for a future article.

MUSIC-TEACHING, PAST AND PRESENT.

BY DR. HUGO RIEMANN.

(Translated from the German.)

WE live at present in the age of *musical over-productivity* not only of music, but also of musicians and musical training institutions. The practice of music has probably never since the world began been in such a flourishing state, so wide-spread among all classes, as to-day. Every year dozens of new music schools arise, each of which annually turns out dozens of new music masters and mistresses, who all earn their bread more or less well by teaching dozens of human beings who in their turn devote themselves to music. That the art must be benefited in the general estimation by this vast extension of the practice of it, is as obvious as that, on the other hand, the average culture of music teachers and learners must fall below the level of former times, in which only the gifted occupied themselves actively with music.

It is, therefore, equally true that at no time has so much good music been written and performed as to-day, and that, on the other hand, much more bad music is made to-day

than ever before. The dilettantism of to-day differs much, to its discredit, from that of the previous century, when really good music was made at home, which stood high above the strumming of our day, for which the *world wide dominion* of the pianoforte deserves no small share of the blame. The professional musician of to-day—the good average musician—does not reach the standard of his *confrères* of a hundred and two hundred years ago; he has degenerated into a workman, in the present meaning of this word. The workman of former centuries was an artist in his special branch, he of modern times is generally nothing more than a labourer.

We will attempt to trace out the reasons for this retrogression in the average culture of the professional musician and to devise a remedy for the defects when found.

The musicians of former centuries were more sharply divided than ours of the present day *into two classes, of quite different courses of training*. Through the whole of the Middle Ages, up to the time of the immense rise of instrumental music in the 17th—18th century, the performers on stringed, wind, and percussion instruments belonged to the lower rank—that of the *players*, the wandering musicians, whose social position was but little esteemed. Perhaps the representatives of the "heroic" art of drum and trumpet playing held a kind of military position with the great ones of the land, belonged to the subordinate Court officials, and as such enjoyed higher esteem than the rest of the instrumentalists.

The first rank, that of the more highly cultured musicians, comprised in the Middle Ages especially the *chapel singers (chantres)*, who in those days, i.e. up to the end of the 16th century, were at the same time the *composers*. The famous masters of polyphonic vocal composition (sacred as well as secular) were, almost without exception, chapel singers (*cantores*), or, if they had the luck to advance thereto, *Capellmeisters (magistri capella)*, from Palestrina and Orlando di Lasso back to the first contrapuntists, such as Dufay, Binchois, Dunstable—indeed, even to Franco of Cologne in the 12th century. In the 15th and 16th centuries, next to the Capellmeisters and "chantres," the *organists* were had in honour, who were likewise recruited from the chapel choirs.

The musical training of this first class of musicians took place in the singing-schools attached to the monasteries and churches, and had nothing at all in common with the training of the instrumentalists. The two classes of music and of musicians even had quite different kinds of notation: the first, the excessively complicated *mensural writing*, which inferred long years of study; the second, the far simpler so-called *tablature writing*.

The instrumentalists formed guilds, with organization similar to all other guilds; i.e. they were divided into *masters, journeymen, and apprentices*. This arrangement has lasted in the so-called *Stadtfeierereien* (Town Pipers' Bands), with slight modifications, up to our century. There is still many an excellent musician now living who has received his training in such a town band, is full of praise of this education, and looks down on his *confrères* of Conservatorium training with a compassionate smile. The training of these *guild musicians* was extraordinarily varied, inasmuch as it extended at the same time to a number of different, or to all, orchestral instruments, and thus provided the apprentices with plenty of practice in reading the various clefs, in transposing, and in other branches of practical skill. As the apprentices were at once employed from the commencement in writing music (copying and re-copying parts), also, later on, instructed in making all sorts of arrangements and in scoring, it could not fail but that several of them, in whom were the necessary talents, developed into composers, and indeed

* Spitta's Bach, vol. i., p. 411, ff.

into composers of practical minds and with clearly-defined aims. Such practical composers in the department of instrumental music may have existed already in the Middle Ages, and then provided the necessary dance music just as at present.

The first class of musicians turned to instrumental composition only gradually in the course of the 16th century. The beginnings of organ literature, it is true, reach back into the 15th century, but are to be looked upon, on the one hand, as without higher musical value, on the other hand, only as an offshoot of vocal music. *Only in the 16th century did organists, as such, gradually step into the front rank of composers,* and accordingly a new nursery of musical instruction arose, especially in Protestant lands, where schools expressly for organists were soon formed, which were in a flourishing state at the beginning of the 17th century. The future organists, however, were also trained at the singing schools of the church choirs, the so-called *Cantorata*, i.e. schools with foundation scholars of choir boys.

The period of the coming forward of organists coincides with the genesis of *thorough-bass figuring* in Italy invented for their convenience, and thus forming a new popular method of theoretical instruction. Indeed, the organist's obvious task of turning the figuring into a correct polyphonic composition, expressly forced on him *practical experience in the mastery of the rules of composition*, the loss of which, through the disappearance of thorough-bass figuring from composition (towards the end of last century) must have been followed by a great falling off in the theoretical education of organists, and not of these alone.

A special position between the actual members of guilds and the musicians trained in monasteries, was occupied by the *Lutenists* in the 16th century, and even already at the end of the 15th. The lute, which spread through Europe from Spain in the 14th century, quickly became the favourite instrument of amateurs, who formerly had very likely occupied themselves with sundry other stringed instruments. Somewhere about the 10th to the 12th century the hurdy-gurdy (with keys) was the favourite instrument of the ladies; at the time of the Minnesingers and Troubadours, the fidula, also instruments of the harp family (the chrotta or crwth) were not at all unusual in the hands of the knights. The clavier came into fashion almost simultaneously with the lute, at first in England, but was in the beginning very imperfect and poor in tone, and not equal to the lute.

Lute players, indeed, soon became, as a matter of course, a constituent part of all bodies of instrumentalists (even at the Courts). But besides this employment in conjunction with other instruments, the lute had, from the first, a prominent position as *solo instrument*, and as the *sole accompaniment to solo singing*, as which it quickly became the general household instrument. That also implied, naturally, an extensive field for private teaching; instruction in the lute, through a couple of centuries, doubtless played a rôle similar to that of pianoforte instruction now. That lute-playing had been particularly favourable to the further development of serious art could hardly be asserted. It acquired, however, an eminently historical significance, as it became the *starting-point of the modern free style*, towards which the nature of the lute urgently tended. The impossibility of exactly rendering a polyphonic composition on this instrument compelled a *limitation to the most necessary notes for gaining effects approximately similar to those required by the ear*. Thus the lute style became the *cradle of composition which accompanies melody by chords*. The clavier could never have led up to the new style, for it needed this limitation as little as did

the organ; but it speedily took it over from the lute, after it was once found out.

The style of accompaniment thus lighted upon by means of the lute now brought about, towards the year 1600, a complete revolution in all musical creation and musical life. For it led to an entire series of new art-forms:—The *Opera*, the *Oratorio*, and *Vocal and Instrumental Concerted Music*—i.e. songs with instrumental accompaniment, and *Canzone* and *Sonatas* for melody instruments (violins, viols, cornets), with accompaniment of organ or cembalo. These innovations brought about also, as a matter of course, quite radical changes in the condition of musical teaching and training.

The churches had in the 16th century already begun to employ instrumentalists, who had on festive occasions to reinforce or even occasionally to replace the voices, in the performance of polyphonic compositions. When, however, composers began to write expressly for instruments, the esteem in which players were held considerably increased, and as by turning to account the technique and peculiar character of the instruments quite new effects, real advances of the art, must have been gained, it is only natural that the players of these instruments now suddenly emerged among the composers of the first class of musicians. Somewhere about 1615, there grew up in composition for several stringed instruments with *continuo*, an entirely new branch of literature of the highest value, out of which all *chamber and orchestral music* developed.

On the titles of printed works, the composers now appear under the designations of "Suonatore di Viola da Braccio," or "di Violino," "Violista," etc., at the churches in Venice, Bologna, Padua, and other places. Indeed, already in 1628 we find Carlo Farina at the court of Dresden as "Electoral Chamber Musician" (*Suonatore di Violino da Camera*), and now begins the period of *Violin Virtuosi*. This new period entirely transformed the outward aspect of the musicians' position. It is true that even in the 17th century, the Capellmeisters of the Roman Church, who had been trained in monasteries, continued to compose (the Roman school preserved, in particular, the Palestrina style up to the present century). But besides these and the *organists* allied to them (Gabrieli, Frescobaldi, Neri, etc.)—to whom we can add as of kindred tendency, the Protestant Capellmeisters (Eccard, Schütz, Albert, etc.), Cantors and Organists—there arose a new secular art which was closely connected with the stage, the *Opera*, which, in the course of the 17th century, overspread the whole of Europe. This new art-species, with its *great demands on creative and executive artists* (singers, male and female, conductors and instrumentalists), necessitated also the *springing up of a great number of new music schools*—above all, those at which *girls were trained as vocalists*. For although the artificial soprano and alto voices of the *castrati* achieved their greatest triumphs in opera, the female voice now began to be fully appreciated. *At the Courts opera quickly crowded out sacred music into the second rank, or at least kept pace with it as a rival factor*, and the *opera Capellmeisters*, for the most part *operatic composers* by profession, soon indisputably became masters of the situation.

The musical training of instrumentalists, i.e. especially of the stringed and wind instrument players, whom we may now, since the rise of opera, call simply *orchestral musicians*, remained, of course, still for some time as in the old guilds. The Conservatoriums, originating already in the 16th century, only introduced instrumental tuition into their curriculum much later. Even the Paris Conservatoire was at first only a singing school for the

training of opera singers, male and female, until Sarette, 1792, accomplished the appointment of the members of the musical corps (formed by him) of the Garde Nationale, as teachers of instrumental playing, at a Government Free Music School; by which means the original "Ecole Royale de Chant et de Déclamation" was expanded into the "Institut National de Musique." Also the Prague and Vienna Conservatoriums originated as *singing schools* for the training of church and oratorio singers, and even the Berlin Royal High School quite gradually developed from the Royal Institute for Church music, through the annexation of instrumental courses. In view of the present position of Conservatoriums, it is not superfluous to refer to this genesis. The Leipzig Conservatorium was perhaps the first in which vocal training did not stand in the front rank from the commencement, and thus that class of institution was inaugurated which may be described simply as *Virtuoso schools*.

At the present time all these classes of musical training school, gradually developed in the course of centuries, exist side by side—church choir schools, operatic schools, and instrumental schools—the last two now, for the most part, combined as Conservatoriums or Academies of Music. The instrumental schools connected with the guilds have, of course, almost entirely ceased to exist; the *military bands corps* may be considered to have taken their place, but in a greatly modified form. It is true, the composition of these latter is mixed up of very heterogeneous elements, for a great number of artistically cultured musicians have to stand in rank and file beside second-rate workmen. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that the three or four years' service in a military band bears a certain resemblance to the old system of musical apprenticeship and journeymanship.

(To be continued.)

MARCHESI AND SINGING.*

If the famous teacher of singing had deliberately sat down to write her memoirs for public perusal, we might have had a volume more monumental in design, and more frigidly proportionate but certainly much less interesting than this *Marchesi and Music*. These reminiscences were written, in the first instance, solely for her family and not intended for publication, and the passages one suspects have been added since the memoirs were first penned, consisting as they do of formal little biographies, do not in any way detract from the charm of spontaneity and, as it were, the intimacy of expression. It is difficult to decide how to notice a book so rich in materials. You could dwell on the biographical part of it; you could show the strong-willed, tender-hearted woman; or you could give an idea of the glimpses to be caught of great composers, singers, and instrumentalists, who follow one another with the ever-changing interest of a kaleidoscope. In her pages you shall see Rossini busy in his bedroom with a *batterie de cuisine*; Berlioz worn out and embittered by his struggle with an unappreciative world; Liszt enforcing his will on his strong-minded Princess Wittgenstein, who smoked big cigars and had a *penchant* for displaying her snow-white feet; Rubinstein as a nationalistic fanatic; or Mendelssohn as a father of a family, superintending the lessons of his children. Pictures such as these flash at you as the pages are turned, and intermingled with them are references to Madame Marchesi's children, to her

difficulties in obtaining a suitable home for her school, to her holiday jaunts, and to a hundred other matters that give us a good idea of the writer's character, even if not of supreme import in themselves.

Apart from this side of the book, however, there is much interest in the maxims on singing which crop up here and there, sometimes with charming unexpectedness. It is well known that Madame Marchesi herself was a singer of talent, but her life-work has undoubtedly been that of teaching—and what a life-work, when she can number among her pupils vocalists as celebrated as Melba, Eames, and Calvé, to mention three only! This genius for teaching was shown quite early in her life; for when barely fifteen she "induced some friends to let her give them lessons in Italian and music," and as quite a young woman we find her being entrusted by Manuel Garcia with some of his pupils when, by reason of an accident, he was unable to give his lessons. In her youth Madame Marchesi had an object lesson in good and bad teaching of singing. One of her first professors was Nicolai, the composer of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, who, by the way, subsequently proposed marriage to his pupil. Nicolai was frank about his attainments, and admitted he understood the rehearsal of an opera much better than he did the production of the human voice. He "often contradicted himself" and "had no physiological knowledge of the voice." Manuel Garcia, on the other hand, "had made a thorough study of anatomy and physiology"; he invented the laryngoscope. "His ideas on the female voice and its development were a revelation to me," says Madame Marchesi, "and they were the foundation of my own future career."

Against such empiricism as that of Nicolai, Madame Marchesi fights with engaging earnestness. Every musician, she tells us, fancies himself capable of teaching singing; "each one seeks to invent a new system, and each one thinks he has found the right thing. One makes his pupil sing with the mouth wide open, another with the mouth wide open, a third with the mouth distorted into a kind of grin. A fourth is of opinion that it is necessary to practise at the top of one's voice four or five hours a day, and yet a fifth says the pupil should murmur *pianissimo*. One professor maintains that there are no registers; another that there are as many as four or five. One, still more ignorant than the rest, states that the chest voice is produced from the chest, and the head voice from the head. Many make their pupils sing with the head bent down, others with the body well forward, swinging to and fro," and so on *ad infinitum*. And then the many methods of breathing! In our author's opinion there is virtually but one mode, taught by Nature herself: the diaphragmatic, or abdominal. The perfect teacher must have a thorough knowledge of physiology and acoustics, enabling him to fix the limits of each individual register and bind them together. Madame Marchesi hints, however, that the hard-and-fast application of scientific rules is dangerous, as the voice "is subject to the changes consequent upon the special organization of each person." How successful in this respect the great teacher has been is well shown by her most famous pupils. On the one hand, Calvé, perhaps the most dramatic singer of the modern operatic stage, and, on the other, Melba, the finest living exponent of the *bel canto*, both owed their art to the Parisian professor.

It is very interesting to note that though Madame Marchesi is adverse to Wagner's treatment of the voice, there are many points in which they agreed; at any rate, theoretically. The Bayreuth composer visited our author at Vienna, and they had a long discussion on matters relating to singing. "He was of opinion that every

* *Marchesi and Music*. Passages from the Life of a famous Singing Teacher. By MATHILDE MARCHESI. With an Introduction by MASSENET. London and New York : Harper Brothers, 1897.

voice should be at the composer's command. I, on the contrary, held that the composer must take into consideration the compass of the different voices, by which interpretation, pronunciation, and declamation must naturally benefit." Then Madame Marchesi adds : "Wagner remained true to his principle, and so, alas ! many voices have been ruined through his music, and many talented singers, both male and female, have been lost by art." That is a very old accusation, but it is extremely doubtful if it be true. I cannot recollect the name of any well-trained singer whose voice has been ruined by singing in Wagner's operas. Jean de Reszke, Edouard de Reszke, Lassalle, Alvarez, and Eames are a few names that occur to me on the spur of the moment. Have the voices of these singers been ruined yet ? I said "well-trained singer" advisedly, because there is no doubt that Wagner's music is difficult to sing, and, in addition to the vocal difficulties, the ordinary conductor, especially if a German, will allow the orchestra to play much too loud, so that there is always a temptation to force the voice. That was not Wagner's idea at all, and that is why his music-dramas can never be given as he intended unless the instrumentalists are placed in an orchestral pit, as at Bayreuth. There all necessity to force seems gone. That modern music need not hurt the voice so long as the singer has been well trained and the music itself be not written contrary to the physiological laws by which the human voice is bound, Madame Marchesi herself admits. Is Wagner's so written ?

But to return to the points of resemblance between the theories of Madame Marchesi and Wagner himself. Our author states that she is of opinion that "though technique must undoubtedly be the foundation of every school, and that florid singers in particular should pay special attention to technique, in no case should expression be disregarded or sacrificed to it." Again, in comparing French with German singers we are told : "The French sing the words ; the Germans sing the music. The French modulate their voices ; the Germans sing from beginning to end with their full power. In Germany a singer must have a powerful voice to be appreciated ; in France a singer must be a good elocutionist. The two combined make the artiste. Personally I am no admirer of big, heavy voices, and lean towards beauty of delivery and dramatic expression." (In parentheses I may here remark that Madame Blanche Marchesi, who has recently captivated all London by her beautifully expressive and artistic singing, is in this respect a shining example of her mother's theories and teaching.) Now let us see what Wagner had to say. He complained that there was no scarcity of good voices in Germany, but that they had all been trained in the wrong school ; that is to say, they followed Madame Marchesi's definition of the German singer. "As our singers do not articulate properly, neither for the most part do they know the meaning of their speeches. . . . In their consequent frenzied hunt for something to please, they light at last on stronger tones strewn here and there, on which they rush with panting breath as best they can, and end by thinking they have sung 'quite dramatically' if they bellow out the phrase's closing note with an emphatic bid for applause."* Then Wagner relates how he freed such a singer of the bad habit by making him "orally and distinctly speak in singing, whilst I brought the lines of musical curvature to his consciousness by getting him to take in one breath, with perfectly even intonation, the calmer, lengthier periods on which he formerly had expended a number of gusty respirations ; when this had been well done I left

it to his natural feeling to give the melodic lines their rightful motion, through accent, rise and fall, according to the verbal sense." In fact, Wagner taught his singer pronunciation and phrasing. Madame Marchesi and the Bayreuth master would have joined hands, too, concerning their views of German conductors in relation to operatic singers. Our author complains that "a well-trained singer in Germany must always be at war with the musical conductor, inasmuch as the latter, only knowing his bâton, attaches little importance to interpretation, and is a sworn enemy to anything in the shape of *rallentando* or *tempo rubato*." Wagner concisely sums up the attitude of the ordinary German conductor of his day, and, possibly, also of ours, in this sentence : "Singer, go by me ! I'm the Kapellmeister, and the tempo is my affair." It is unfortunate that Wagner's music is never properly sung by German artists, and, as Madame Marchesi remarks of Bayreuth, "even the pronunciation, which is so necessary in declamatory singing," is "far from perfect." What Wagner wanted, and what Madame Marchesi admires, is the combination of a good singer and a good elocutionist. Jean de Reszkes and Lassalles are rare indeed !

If I knew any young lady, possessing a good voice, who desired to take up the profession of singer, I would commend her forthwith to *Marchesi and Music*. She would learn from its pages that the majority of the great singing-mistress's successful pupils studied with her for three years, "only very few remaining but two ;" that to be a good singer it is necessary to have, first of all, a good general education ; that one must be "something of a pianist," and should study languages, elocution, and acting, besides having a good working knowledge of harmony. Nowadays the ordinary young lady fancies that singing is an easy and pleasant way of gaining a living and fame. Madame Marchesi would undeceive her. It is a pity that in so interesting and valuable a book there should appear so many trivial and absurd misprints. A second edition should be thoroughly corrected. I cannot, however, forgive the wrong notation of Ferdinand Hiller's musical signature. An A is printed instead of B natural, the equivalent of the German H, and thus the whole point of the pun is lost.

EDWARD BAUGHAN.

LETTER FROM LEIPZIG.

THE sixth Gewandhaus Concert began with Haydn's D major Symphony (the best known and most famous) and ended with Beethoven's in D major. The vocalist was Frau Edel, from Hamburg. Herr Georg Wille, a member of the orchestra, played admirably Volkmann's Concerto, heard already for the third time this winter, which ought to be allowed a rest for a few years. The seventh Gewandhaus Concert opened with Saint-Saëns' symphonic poem, "La Jeunesse d'Hercule." The most striking characteristics of the composer are clever workmanship and *esprit*, and both are here ; but invention is wanting, and he does not hesitate to employ brutality and uncompromising ugliness. The other orchestral numbers were Beethoven's *Egmont* overture and Mozart's *Jupiter* symphony. The soloist was Herr Stanislaus Barcewicz, from Warsaw, who achieved great and well-deserved success by his rendering of Bruch's 1st Violin Concerto. This concerto, too, as everywhere, so also here, is very often heard, but it stands on a far higher plane as a composition than Volkmann's Concerto.

In the eighth concert we heard the F major Symphony by Goetz. The Scherzo pleased, as always, but the other movements have after a time lost their charm. The soloist was M. Edouard Risler, from Paris, who introduced himself not very favourably with Beethoven's E flat major Concerto. According to modern fashion, he offended by very arbitrary alterations of *tempo* in the middle of the movements,

* Mr. W. Ashton Ellis's translation.

and by a frequently too massive tone. Neither was he very fortunate in the solos, for he played Mozart's A minor Rondo without expression throughout, but was more satisfactory in Chopin's F minor Fantasia. The remaining orchestral items were Liszt's *Tasso* and the entr'acte from Schubert's *Rosamunde*.

The second soirée of the Gewandhaus "Kammermusik-Abende" opened with the quartet in E flat major by Mendelssohn, not heard for a long time, and therefore greeted with double pleasure. There followed the quartet in E flat major by Tschaikowsky, and the quintet, Op. III, by Brahms—all excellently played, as never fails to be the case when Herren Hilf, Becker, Schäfer, and Klengel unite. Herr Werner took the second viola in the quintet. The third evening (Concertmeister Lewinger, Rother, Unkenstein, and Wille) brought us Haydn's Quartet, B flat major, Op. 76; Volkmann's in G minor, Op. 14; and Beethoven's in C major, Op. 59. Very unwillingly do we dispense with chamber-music works with piano this winter.

The Sing-Akademie produced Tinell's *Fransiskus* for the third time within the last few years, a preference which we do not understand, as the work, to which we cannot in justice deny several merits, suffers severely from want of style. The work was well performed under Dr. Paul Klengel's baton, yet did not come up to the former occasions. Herr Emil Goetz distinguished himself among the soloists; the interpreters of the less important parts, Herren Carl Weidt, Felix Schmidt, and Franz Seebach, achieved satisfactory results, while Fr. Clara Ehrhardt was not at all equal to her task.

Of the more interesting extra concerts, we may mention the very well-attended "Lieder-Abend" of Fr. Adrienne Osborne, whose collaborateur, Herr Felix Berber, won recognition especially as a skilful executant. Further, the first concert of Miss Hannah Bryant (a pupil of Siloti), who played (with the Winderstein orchestra) Schumann's A minor Concerto, Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasia (Liszt), and Liszt's E flat major Concerto, and gave token of an already advanced technique, while her rendering was distinguished (not exactly favourably) by mannerisms. The first-named concerto was least successful, and suffered particularly from far too quick *tempo*, especially in the Finale. Herr Siloti conducted. The vocalist, Fr. Olga von Broemsen, made a very good impression.

Josef Hofmann, the former child-prodigy, gave a concert, and proved that he has ripened into a genuine artist. He played sonatas by Beethoven and Chopin, pieces of his own composition, and by Liszt, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Rubinsteins, etc. Mr. Frederick Lamond, who played no less than five Beethoven sonatas, merits all respect, though it cannot be denied that here and there his performance suffered through some not quite tasteful exaggerations in "dynamic" and occasional mannerisms. A new child-prodigy, the ten-year-old pianist, Paula Szalit, made a well-justified sensation. Her performance of several pieces by Handel, Mendelssohn, Raff, Chopin, etc., gave evidence of indubitable genuine talent, and an Etude of her own composing shows that she also possesses talent for composition.

The Conservatorium gave a concert in memory of a deceased benefactor, Herr Hofrath Radius. The orchestra executed Gade's B flat major Symphony and Weber's *Oberon* overture quite perfectly, under Sitt's excellent guidance; the ladies Hartung, Hunger, and Klein sang a terzet with pianoforte accompaniment by Carl Reinecke, to the general satisfaction.

The Liszt-Verein made a grave mistake in entrusting the direction of their last concert to a young man still a university student, who had never had a baton in his hand before. But it was also very unwise on his part to accept such an offer, and to venture to conduct, besides a so-called symphonic poem of his own composition, *Don Juan* and *Tod und Verklärung*, by Richard Strauss. For the sake of his future career, we refrain from giving the young fellow's name, and only add that, as was to be expected, the performance of all the works was anything but satisfactory.

The Conservatorium is at present very well attended, and affords the most gratifying proof of the capabilities of its students in the weekly concert evenings.

LETTER FROM BERLIN.

THE Meiningen Hofkapelle, under the spirited direction of Fritz Steinbach, concluded its Brahms cycle referred to last month. By a singular anomaly, the final number, Wagner's *Meistersinger* overture, met with an irresistible encore! Thus this special Brahms celebration culminated in a kind of peace festival—the fraternization of the representatives of classic form and "new paths."

A noteworthy feature at the Philharmonic Concerts, under Arthur Nikisch, was the appearance of Edouard Risler, who on this occasion, as well as at his two pianoforte recitals, again asserted his claim to front rank among living pianists. The young Frenchman had also officiated with conspicuous distinction as "Maestro al piano," both at the last Bayreuth Festival and at the *Meistersinger* production at the Grand Opera, Paris.

A great treat was offered by the celebrated Royal "Domchor" at a concert given in the magnificent Emperor William Memorial Church, under the conductorship of Professor Albert Becker, with Dr. H. Reimann at the organ, the programme consisting of a series of truly sublime *a capella* Christmas hymns and other works by Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso, La Bogue, Bach, etc. The concert was repeated by imperial command. No less interesting was the selection offered by the Berliner Liedertafel, conducted by A. Zander. It included the names of Orlando di Lasso, Gastoldi, Karl Löwe, and others. A highly attractive organ recital, varied by vocal soli, was also given in the above-named church by Dr. Reimann, who shone no less as executant than as composer of a Canzone from a suite, a grand fantasia on the chorals "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern," and other works.

The singularly dramatic biblical episode of John the Baptist, which has already inspired the pen of Johannes Hager, George Macfarren, and others, has been musically treated by Carl Mengewein with consummate contrapuntal skill, more particularly in the choruses, whilst the melodic interest gains warmth and colour in the progress of the work, which may be recommended to the notice of choral societies in England.

The Fitzner string quartet from Vienna increased its reputation by a very successful cycle of evening concerts, tone, conception and ensemble being alike excellent. The introduction of novelty is another claim to commendation, although Alexander Zemlinsky's quartet, written in the manner, but without the genius, of Brahms, was an unfortunate choice. Let us hope that the young composer's Prince Luitpold of Bavaria (second) prize opera, is made of better stuff! Amends were made by Hermann Grädener's fine Quartet in D. The equally eclectic "Bohemian Quartet," of world-wide fame, produced a new pianoforte quintet in B minor by Gernsheim, with the composer at the piano, freshness of invention being chiefly confined to the scherzo. A new trio by E. Schütt, introduced by the pianist-composer, with Zajic and Grünfeld as associates, is smoothly written and well worth the attention of instrumental amateurs. The modern Paganini, Willy Burmester, again astonished by his marvellous technique, whilst his rendering of Bach, Spohr, etc., stamps him as genuine artist.

A greater pianistic contrast than that the playing of the masculine Teresa Carreño and the feminine Vladimir de Pachmann it would be hard to conceive. The last-named eccentric Pole, who WILL have his little speech, exclaimed at the end of the recital: "All without pedal! THAT is true art!" His touch is indeed remarkable. But a still greater than he, Anton Rubinstein, called the pedal "the soul of the piano." The concert of the clever pianist, Miss Mabel Seyton, pupil of Klindworth, calls for notice, if only on account of Jean Nicodé's masterly orchestration of Chopin's "Allegro de Concert."

An event of the season was the series of three recitals given by Lilli Lehmann, who was equally admirable in the interpretation of lyrics by Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Cornelius, Brahms, etc. No fewer than seven eminent baritones—Scheidemantel, Dr. Ludwig Wüllner, Ludwig Strakosch, Dr. Mannreich, Eduard Fessler, Eugen Gura (the original "Hans Sachs"), and Hermann Gura, jun., a worthy son of his great parent—delighted their audiences at their vocal recitals.

The Berliners have no need to travel to Bayreuth to hear the

Nibelungen Ring. Here we had the third cycle of Wagner's mighty tetralogy given during the present winter season, under the baton of Dr. Muck, with the addition of the very remarkable young Bayreuth tenor, Aloys Burgstaller (Siegfried), and Van Rooy (Wotan). We also had Heinrich Vogl, the original Loge, from Munich; Friedrichs, the famous Alberich, from Bremen; Marion, a close copy of Liban's typical Mime; Sylva, an excellent Siegmund; Mödlinger, a genuine *basso profundo*; Sucher, an ideal Sieglinde, and Lilli Lehmann, a marvellous Brünnhilde, even the smaller parts being filled by such artists as Mmes. Götze, Herzog, Hiedler, etc.

Mozart, who likewise gave a "new art" to Germany, even in a far wider and deeper sense, follows with his great "*Pleïades*" (*Idomeneus to Titus*). The G minor Symphony, "*Maurerische Trauermusik*," and Requiem were also performed in memory of the master's death (5th December, 1791).

J. B. K.

December, 1897.

Errata.—Read in Berlin Letter of last month, p. 271: highly (not "brightly") original; with orchestra (not "with the orchestra").

Correspondence.

To the Editor of THE MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

"THE BLIND SAMSON."

SIR,—While agreeing with Mr. Oelsner so far as to think "culture" of almost any and every kind an excellent thing for musicians, tending to widen and deepen their views and quicken their imagination, I must say I fancy he has somewhat mistaken the drift of Mr. Baughan's article. What the latter seemed to me to be objecting to, was valuable time being devoted (not leisure moments) to the thorough study of other subjects, thus necessarily taking away from that which ought to be given to those almost limitless fields intimately connected with musical training, analysis, orchestration, and the like. It is a fact that young musicians rush nowadays into composition before they have mastered the groundwork of Harmony, let alone Form. So it is natural that the more thoughtful among critics and musicians should deprecate the urging on them of utterly foreign, distracting branches of knowledge. Yours truly,

A. L. A. M.

SIR,—I must leave to some more persuasive pen than mine the task of trying to convince Mr. Baughan, seeing that this gentleman merely re-states his point, "that musicians have so much to learn concerning their own art that they should not waste time over general culture." He condemns Strauss' and Weingartner's subjects without adducing a single proof to show why it is that these composers have gone so utterly wrong in their choice of themes. Of one thing I am absolutely positive—namely, that no aesthetic work will ever save Dvorák, or, for the matter of that, any musician, artist, or poet, from giving to the world a bad work, if he has not got it in him to produce a good one; nor will any book of theory ever stay the hands of a votary of the Muses, when he is engaged on what he fondly imagines to be a work of art. His conscience will not have much difficulty in settling, to its own satisfaction, the question as to which of the two is right—the mere theorist or the great creative artist. Men of genius like Dürer, Lessing, and Wagner, and even lesser lights such as Boileau and Sir Joshua, were no mere theorists: their true greatness lies in the fact that they practised what they preached, that they "recked their own rede."

I see from your December number that R. Strauss and Schillings played Weingartner's *Gefilde der Seligen* (arranged for four hands) at a Munich concert given in Böcklin's honour, and quite agree with you, when you say that "it was a happy thought to bring together four such great names in one performance."

I must apologise, by the way, for having described Böcklin's painting (which I had not seen for some considerable time) as

depicting "a number of people riding about on swans." There are swans in it, but nobody is on them; the only person "riding about" is a lovely girl on a Centaur.

I am, Sir, faithfully yours, H. OELSNER.

London, December 3rd, 1897.

"HOW TO DRAW UP A RECITAL PROGRAMME."

DEAR SIR,—In your last number, E. M. Trevenen Dawson has written wisely and wittily on the art of achieving a "really acceptable, up-to-date recital programme." Careful study of recent actual programmes, we are told, has enabled the writer to formulate rules for such achievement. No one, I think, would have anything to add to, or take away from those rules, by way of improvement. And yet I miss one thing in this otherwise excellent article, i.e. the very short list of pianists who have dared to offer programmes not on the lines which are so clearly laid down. Two names specially occur to me at the present moment: those of Mme. Frickenhaus and Mlle. Clothilde Kleeberg; I may even give a third, Mr. R. Buchmayer, the latest arrival. These three pianists—and no doubt a few others might be added—have risked not being "acceptable"; they have thought of art rather than the taste of the public, or the convenience of the critics. At any rate, the names of the two ladies who have for many seasons drawn up programmes of doubtful popularity might have been given, if only by way of warning to any young pianists disposed to strike out a new path.

Yours truly, J. S. SHEDLOCK.

OUR MUSIC PAGES.

OUR young friends get their turn this month, or rather, their teachers, who will be glad to see specimens from Cornelius Gurlitt's latest Pianoforte Album (Op. 219) for them. The three numbers we have chosen out of the twenty-four contained in the Album will be found (we hope) specially appropriate to New Year's Day, beginning with a "Cheerful Waking" and ending with an "Evening Song," which, while placidly flowing, is still cheerful, while the space between morning and evening is filled with "Youthful Pleasure." Such may also be every holiday in 1898 to our young pianists!

Reviews of New Music and New Editions.

Voice, Speech, and Gesture: a practical Handbook to the Elocutionary Art. New and Enlarged Edition. London : Deacon & Co.

THIS popular book, containing a perfect storehouse of selections for recitation, is much enlarged in its new form. Several new pieces for recitation have been added, and a chapter on "Recitation Music," by Stanley Hawley, which gives directions as to the manner of declaiming those poems to which he has provided music. The musical examples included in the chapter help to make his meaning clearer. Section 5, in the earlier part of the book, is also of interest to musicians, for in it Mr. Corder gives some valuable hints as to the recitation of (amongst others) Grieg's "Bergliot" and Mackenzie's "Dream of Jubal," with musical illustrations, besides giving a useful list, on pp. 194-195, of works for recitation and music combined, ranging from several by Liszt and Schumann down to Mackenzie and Stanley Hawley. Mr. Clifford Harrison remarks (in Section 4, "Reciting and Recitative") of Liszt's and Schumann's

CORNELIUS GURLITT'S
ALBUM

for the Pianoforte.

Op. 219.

(Augener's Edition N° 6174.)

N° 1. CHEERFUL WAKING.

(*Frohes Erwachen.*)

Moderato.

PIANO.

Music Printing Office, 10, Lexington Street, London, W.



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Nº 14. YOUTHFUL PLEASURE.

(Jugendlust.)

Allegretto.

PIANO.

The sheet music consists of five staves of piano music. The first staff starts with a dynamic of *mf* and a tempo marking of *Allegretto*. The second staff begins with a dynamic of *p* and a tempo marking of *con spirito*. The third staff starts with a dynamic of *f*. The fourth staff starts with a dynamic of *p*. The fifth staff ends with a dynamic of *p*. Various slurs and grace notes are present throughout the music. Measures are numbered above the top staff. The music includes sections labeled *Ad.* and ** Ad.*

The musical score consists of six staves of piano music, arranged vertically. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom four are in bass clef. The key signature is A major (two sharps). The time signature varies between common time and 6/8. The music includes various dynamics such as *cresc.*, *f*, *poco riten.*, *mf a tempo*, and *ritenuto poco a poco*. The notation features eighth and sixteenth note patterns, with some notes tied across measures. The first staff has an asterisk (*) below it. The last staff ends with a fermata over the final note.

[January 1, 1898.]

Nº 15. EVENING SONG.

(*Abendlied.*)



ballads for recitation, that "They are pre-eminently musical. They should be pre-eminently declamatory," and therefore he does not believe they could ever become popular. As he says in another place, "The mistake musicians have often made when they have composed music for a recited poem is that they have overburdened the words with music."

E. M. T. D.

Select Songs from the Oratorios and Operas of G. F. Handel. Edited by H. HEALE. No. 33. "No sylvan shade" (Ombra mai fu), from *Xerxes*. No. 34. "Sweet rose and lily," from *Theodora*. No. 35. "Let other creatures die," from *Jephtha*. London : Augener & Co.

WE have already noticed the two songs from *Theodora* and *Jephtha* under "Examination Music," and need only mention that they now appear in the Handel series as well. As regards the ever-popular "Ombra mai fu," this edition is in a lower key (E flat), the former Nos., 31 and 32, being in F and G major respectively.

Songs. By EDWARD GRIEG. Arranged for female voices by H. HEALE. "Sea Song," 2-part (Edition No. 4082); "Song of the Mountains," 2-part (Edition No. 4084); "Fatherland's Psalm," 2- or 3-part (Edition No. 4085); "Fisher's Song," 3-part (Edition No. 4260); each, price, net, 3d. London : Augener & Co.

THESE four songs of Grieg's lend themselves admirably to part-singing. Indeed, to our mind, the "Fatherland's Psalm" sounds all the better for a fuller body of sound, which suits well its grand, impressivestyle, and for the same reason we think it would be a pity to omit the piano part, though marked "ad lib." That delightfully spirited "Fisher's Song" is arranged for three voices, while the quiet, graceful "Song of the Mountains" and the characteristically Norwegian "Sea Song" are set for two.

Polpourris on Popular Melodies from Classical and Modern Operas and Oratorios. By RICHARD HOFMANN:—

- 5415 MENDELSSOHN. St. Paul.
- 5416 MOZART. Il Seraglio.
- 5417 MOZART. Il Flauto magico.
- 5418 MOZART. Don Giovanni.
- 5419 WEBER. Der Freischütz.
- 5420 BALFE. The Bohemian Girl.
- 5421 BEETHOVEN. Egmont.
- 5422 BEETHOVEN. Fidelio.
- 5423 DONIZETTI. L'Elisire d'Amore.
- 5424 DONIZETTI. Lucrezia Borgia.
- 5425 GLUCK. Iphigénie en Aulide.

G. For Flute, Violin, Violoncello and Pianoforte. Net, 1s. 6d.

H. For Flute, Violoncello and Pianoforte. Net, 1s. 4d.

I. For Flute and Pianoforte. Net, 1s.

K. For Flute Solo. Net, 6d.

Extra String and Flute parts, each net, 4d.

London : Augener & Co.

WE have already spoken often before in praise of these excellent arrangements; so now merely call attention to the additional parts recently added for flute, and to be procured, as will be noticed, at a very reasonable rate. These will be welcome to amateurs as "recreative" music during the Christmas holidays, we have no doubt.

An Album of 12 Hush Songs. By ALICIA ADELAÏDE NEEDHAM. London : Boosey & Co.

WHILE all these songs are well written, melodious, and singable, we cannot say we consider that they come up to the high standard of most of Mrs. Needham's former work ; not that the composition is not good, only Mrs. Needham has accustomed us to something more strikingly original, and here both melody progressions and harmonies are in general so very "obvious," not to say occasionally "reminiscent," as in "Husheen," "Toss a brown baby," and the "Jewish Lullaby," for example. Moreover, neither in the Jewish nor the Negro Lullaby can we find that the national characteristics have been quite "hit off." On the other hand, "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," and "The Fairy's Lullaby," while quite simply written, are very taking and quaint.

E. M. T. D.

Progressive Studies. Op. 46. By STEPHEN HELLER. Critically revised, phrased, and fingered by HERRMANN SCHOLTZ. C. (Edition No. 6188 ; price, net, 2s.) London : Augener & Co.

HELLER wrote many delightful pieces for the pianoforte, and yet his name is now rarely seen on a recital programme. His Studies, however, are always in request ; they attract by reason of their fresh, pleasing melody ; young players easily forget the title of study, and look upon them as little pieces. And such they are, in fact ; for in them technique is a means, not an end. No. 23 is a study on notes repeated with changing fingers, and No. 25, one which offers practice in arpeggio chords ; the light humour of the first, and the graceful melody which underlies the arpeggios of the second, are, however, the special features which attract. Of studies so well and so widely known there is no occasion to speak in detail. They have been carefully revised, phrased, and fingered by Herrmann Scholtz ; and for this, teachers, to say nothing of pupils, will be grateful. It may be well to add that although bearing a higher opus number, they are really preparatory to the 25 Melodious Studies, Op. 45.

Lyrica : Melodische Übungstücke für das Pianoforte. By ARNOLD KRUG. Op. 72, Bks. 1 & 2. (Edition Nos. 6210a and b ; price, net, each, 1s.) London : Augener & Co.

EACH of these volumes contains five short pieces, all of which, after the fashion of the day, have titles. They are only of moderate difficulty, and the writing for the instrument is grateful ; at the same time, there is good practice for the fingers. *Lyrica* is, in fact, a collection of pieces which teachers will appreciate, and which pupils will enjoy. We fancy the second volume, with its "Caged Bird" and "Cradle Song," will be the more popular, but there are good things in both.

Perles Musicales : Recueil de Morceaux de Salon pour Piano. No. 61. W. BARGIEL, Album, No. 1 in F sharp minor ; No. 62, ARNOLD KRUG, Italienische Barcarole ; No. 63, G. BORCH, Chanson et Danse Norvégienne ; No. 64, E. HABERBIER, Chanson sans Paroles ; No. 65, NIELS W. GADE, Albumblatt in B flat ; No. 66, R. KLEINMICHEL, Etude Mélodique, Op. 57, No. 7 ; No. 67, A. C. MACKENZIE, Forester's Song ; No. 68, A. RUBINSTEIN, Preghiera ; No. 69, X. SCHARWENKA, Minuetto, Op. 62, No. 5 ; No. 70, A. STRELEZKI, Pastorella ; No. 71, CH. MAVER, Valse de Salon in D ; No. 72, PERCY Pitt, Scène de Ballet. London : Augener & Co.

THE term *morceaux de salon* has often been used in a depreciatory sense. This is somewhat unfortunate, seeing

that not only have there been *salons* in the past in which good taste prevailed, but that, with the spread of education, their musical tone generally, has indeed materially improved. A light style of music is not necessarily bad, and tastes fortunately vary. Bargiel's music is somewhat neglected ; it has been, and is still, overshadowed by that of Robert Schumann. Nevertheless he has written some clever, characteristic pianoforte pieces, among which the one in the present collection may be included. Krug's Barcarole, by reason of its quaintness and simplicity, cannot fail to become popular. And the quaint Norwegian music of Borch will prove a close rival. The Haberbier Chanson is an attractive melody ; from a rhythmical point of view it is exceedingly interesting. The last number has lightness and much charm. Kleinmichel's *Etude* is excellent practice in *staccato* ; but, as the title shows, there is melody as well as technique in it. The names of the other composers may safely be left to speak for themselves.

Selections and Movements from the Works of Celebrated Composers. Arranged for Organ by J. WODEHOUSE. March from 4th Symphony, MENDELSSOHN. Andante ("From Foreign Parts"), M. MOSZKOWSKI. London : Augener & Co.

MENDELSSOHN'S *Andante* in his Italian Symphony has been called, and not inappropriately, the Pilgrims' March. This characteristic movement lends itself well to organ treatment ; the *staccato* passages for the bass strings sound well on the pedals. The soft-flowing Moszkowski *Andante* is also effective in its new dress. Both transcriptions show skill and taste in the matter of registering.

Vortragsstücke für Violine mit Pianoforte Begleitung. By RICHARD HOFMANN. Op. 103. No. 1, Intermezzo ; No. 2, Barcarola ; No. 3, Aria ; No. 4, Bolero ; No. 5, Berceuse ; No. 6, Zigeunertanz ; No. 7, Cavatina ; No. 8, Perpetuum Mobile. London : Augener & Co.

IN the days of the classical masters violinists were comparatively few in number, and for the most part confined to the male sex ; the harpsichord or pianoforte was then the ladies' instrument. It is not so very long ago that it was even thought uncomely for a lady to play the violin. Nowadays, though the pianoforte is as popular as ever, the number of violin players has become legion, and the supply of violin musical literature, though much increased of late, is scarcely equal to the demand. These pieces of R. Hofmann are short and attractive ; and if we say they are showy, that term must be taken in the best sense ; the music is always refined. The titles indicate that some are quiet, some lively ; and as they are short, two played consecutively, will, if suitably selected, offer an agreeable and effective contrast.

Albums for Violin and Piano. Arranged by F. HERMANN. Vols. V. and VI. (Edition Nos. 7322c, £, bound together, price, net, 5s.) London : Augener & Co.

THESE two albums (bound in one) contain transcriptions, and effective ones, of favourite modern pieces ; the transcriber is Fr. Hermann, whose skill and experience are well known. The first one contains nine numbers ; the second eight—one, however, including H. Scholtz's three short and refined *Albumbüller*. It would occupy too much space to deal with them in detail ; and, seeing that they all bear the names of well-known composers, this is, indeed, scarcely necessary. In the first Album we find, amongst others, Chopin, Rubinstein, Scharwenka, and Nicodé ; in the second, Haydn, who is represented

by his famous *Ox Minuet*, Tschaikowsky, and H. Scholtz. Transcriptions, in spite of what purists may say, are always welcome ; Beethoven himself was not averse to such a method of increasing the circulation of his music.

Sixteen Studies for Violin Solo. By H. E. KAYSER. Op. 28. Carefully revised, fingered, and with instructive annotations by ERNST HEIM. (Edition No. 8660, price, net, 1s. 6d.) The same, for two violins. (Edition No. 5619 ; price, net, 2s.) London : Augener & Co.

THESE excellent and useful studies deal with the half, and with the seven positions ; the last, however, is devoted to changing positions. H. E. Kayser, who has now been dead nearly ten years, was one of the most celebrated and successful teachers of his day ; his studies, Op. 20, enjoy a wide circulation. Those now under notice have been revised and carefully marked by Ernst Heim. No. 5619 includes a part for second violin, which adds considerably to the interest of the solo part, the aim of which is, naturally, chiefly mechanical.

Scale and Arpeggio Manual for the Violoncello. Arranged by HENRY BAST. (Edition No. 7768 ; price, net, 1s.) London : Augener & Co.

THIS useful Manual has been specially arranged for candidates at the various local examinations. It comprises major and minor scales in all keys, also chromatic scales and arpeggios. The work has been carefully edited by Henry Bast.

Operas and Concerts.

SAVOY THEATRE.

ON December 4th, Mr. D'Oyly Carte somewhat astonished the patrons of the Savoy Theatre by placing upon that stage, so long devoted to "Gilbert and Sullivan Topsy-turvydom," *The Grand Duchess of Offenbach*. The difficulty as to some portions of that opera-bouffe which have always been regarded as too Parisian in style, was overcome by completely altering the last act, in which the wedding of Fritz and Wanda is interrupted in so unseemly a manner. There does not appear much motive in the present arrangement beyond the jealousy of the Duchess, but a theatre where the proprieties are so studied could not possibly present such scenes as occur in the work as it originally stood. When first produced at the Variétés, Paris, April 12th, 1867, French playgoers were just in the mood to welcome any satire, however coarse, against Germany. The toy army of the Grand Duchess, the burlesque Commander-in-Chief, the grotesque and fantastic court, and the unfeminine behaviour of the Sovereign, were all taken by reckless Parisian audiences as real pictures of life in a small German state, and the composer, although a native of Cologne, did not scruple to try and make the Fatherland ridiculous. But there was one redeeming feature in all this buffoonery : Offenbach, with all his eccentricity, was a real musician, and he had a gift of melody no other opera-bouffe composer had equalled. Another cause of the extreme popularity of *The Grand Duchess* were the extraordinary freaks of Hortense Schneider, who, in addition to her excellent singing and acting, caused quite a sensation by her extravagances on the stage. Schneider abandoned all reserve in this character, and from lyrics to leap-frog, the representative of the Gerolstein Grand Duchy was prepared to sacrifice herself to gratify the vulgar tastes of her admirers. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's version was a new one by Messrs. Brookfield and Adrian Ross. But while we can commend the libretto for its judicious reserve, we confess to have found it somewhat tame. The lyrics were much inferior to the English version of the late Charles Lamb Kenney, who caught the spirit and gaiety of the original without

its vulgarity. It was unlucky also on the first night that Miss Florence St. John was so out of voice (owing to recent illness) that she could not do justice to the music, and her acting so toned down the pranks of the heroine that one almost lost sight of the Grand Duchess of the original creation. But Mr. Passmore was amusing as the General, Mr. H. A. Lytton made an excellent Prince Paul, and Miss Florence Perry was a very clever Wanda. Another change made by the librettists was to represent the stolid Fritz as a modern cockney "Tommy Atkins," a great mistake. The choruses were admirably rendered, and the orchestra, with the instrumentation elaborated by Mr. Ernest Ford in a very artistic manner, went well. Mr. D'Oyly Carte has made a protest against the comments of the critics. But they really found no fault. The chief drawback was the attempt to turn an Offenbach opera-bouffe into a Gilbert and Sullivan production, and if the opera does not enjoy a long run this will be the cause. We can very well dispense with the coarse scenes which stimulated the Parisian audiences of 1867, but we cannot so well spare the gaiety, sparkle, and vivacity formerly associated with Offenbach's pretty music and the whimsical libretto.

THE POPULAR CONCERTS.

LADY HALLE was once more heard at the Popular Concerts on December 6th, and at the previous Saturday concert Mr. Kruse and Messrs. Inwards, Gibson, and Paul Ludwig gave a second performance of Eugen D'Albert's String Quartet in E flat. This work made a great impression, especially in the very original scherzo. Mdlle. Kleeberg on Monday was encored in Beethoven's Sonata in D, Op. 10, and in response played Schumann's Novelette, Op. 99. She also joined Mr. Kruse in the ever-popular Kreutzer Sonata, which evoked the old enthusiasm. People have happily forgotten the extravagant ideas of Count Tolstoi, and are content to accept Beethoven's wonderful music for its own sake. Miss Greta Williams sang with success.

The last Monday Popular Concert before Christmas was given on December 13th, and attracted the largest audience of the season. The appearance of Dr. Grieg was the cause of the unwonted numbers, for, as a matter of fact, the Monday audiences have been rather scanty as a rule. Dr. Grieg appeared under favourable circumstances, as Lady Hallé took part in his sonata in F. He had an extraordinary reception in four of his *Humoresken*, delightful compositions and delightfully played by the composer. They are not exactly "humorous" according to modern ideas, but they are so fresh, gay, and sparkling with gems of melody, that they quite excited Dr. Grieg's auditors, who called him back to the platform, when the composer gave one of his charming Lyrical Sketches. Three of Grieg's songs were rendered by Miss Isabel MacDougall, and the programme also included Beethoven's so-called "Harp" Quartet led by Lady Hallé.

AMATEUR ORCHESTRAL SOCIETIES.

OUR amateurs have been doing much to increase the love of orchestral music. The Westminster Orchestral Society, conducted by Mr. Stewart Macpherson, gave an excellent concert at Westminster Town Hall on December 8th, when Beethoven's Symphony in D was well rendered. Three of Dvorák's Slavonic Dances, Op. 46, were most welcome. The vocalist was Miss Georgina Delmar; and Mr. Donald Heins displayed much ability as a violinist.—On the same evening the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society opened its twenty-sixth season at Queen's Hall. Mr. George Mount, who so ably conducted the concerts for many years, has been succeeded by Mr. Ernest Ford, and his services were warmly appreciated. The Royal Amateur Orchestra does not object to music which at the present day is apt to be considered old-fashioned. Haydn's Second Symphony in D, of the Salomon set, was given by the orchestra with no little animation, and, if it seemed somewhat behind the times, its cheerfulness and variety pleased. Nos. 1 and 3 of Dvorák's quaint Legends, originally written as pianoforte duets and afterwards instrumented for the orchestra, were well played. Mendelssohn's *Ruy Blas* overture and the *Tannhäuser* march began and ended the programme. Mr. Douglas Boxall, an extremely clever young pianist from the Guildhall School of

Music, distinguished himself in Liszt's *Fantaisie Hongroise*. Mme. Julia Lennox and Mdlle. Ottie Brony sang, the latter being particularly successful in a Danish song.—The Stock Exchange Orchestra is another excellent body of amateurs, for many years conducted by Mr. George Kitchin. But that gentleman being compelled through ill health to resign, Mr. Arthur Payne, the excellent violinist, undertook the duties of conductor. One of the best-played items was Mr Hamish MacCunn's overture, *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*. The orchestra also gave a good rendering of Beethoven's C minor Symphony. Mr. G. Walenn played violin solos, and Miss Lucile Hill sang. The male-voice choir gave glees and part-songs. Altogether, the Society may be said to be one of the most successful of the amateur associations.

EMIL SAUER'S RECITALS.

THE pianoforte recitals of Herr Sauer have been among the chief sensations of the season. It is a pity, perhaps, that musical amateurs crave for mere sensational effects to the extent they do, but it is fortunate that Herr Sauer, while fully able to gratify them, has also at his command a fund of genuine artistic power, which he displayed to the greatest advantage at his first recital on December 8th, at St. James's Hall. One of his finest efforts was in Schumann's Carnival, Op. 9, which has rarely been so well played. Herr Sauer gave a variety and charm to the music which delighted every lover of Schumann. Beethoven's early sonata Pathétique in C minor, Op. 13, was finely rendered, and the B flat minor sonata of Chopin, with its lovely Funeral March, reflected the highest credit on the pianist, who thought and felt as well as fingered the splendid music. On Thursday, 16th, Herr Sauer devoted his entire programme to the Polish composer. As a rule, selections from one composer have been less popular this season than they used to be, but in this instance the prodigious gifts of the executant appealed to concert patrons in addition to the beauty of the music, and the choice made of Chopin's compositions also proved very attractive. Herr Sauer will leave London with his reputation greatly enhanced by the admirable performances he has given, while his popularity has grown immensely with the general public.

RICHARD STRAUSS AT QUEEN'S HALL.

ON Tuesday, December 7th, Herr Richard Strauss's appearance at Queen's Hall attracted an enormous audience. His style of conducting was essentially different from that of Felix Mottl, but it was in his own compositions that the contrast was most marked. In *Tod und Verklärung*, Richard Strauss has given the musical amateur something extremely difficult to digest. He has attempted to depict in music the mental tortures of one at the point of death. Some relief is afforded when the soul is supposed to depart, and there are a few passages of a melodious and cheering kind. But with all the respect we feel for a composer so gifted, we find a difficulty in unreservedly accepting the latest example of his genius. Herr Strauss must really make a little concession to the less "advanced" of our audiences. They could hardly follow him in this instance.

ROYAL CHORAL SOCIETY.

SIR FREDERICK BRIDGE conducted the *Faust* of Berlioz for the first time on Monday, December 6th. Dr. Bridge made some slight alterations in *tempo*, taking the movements a little slower than the late Sir Joseph Barnby. As we understand, the composer himself gave his ideas on that subject to Sir Charles Hallé, and as Sir Frederick Bridge has adopted that reading nobody can find any fault with the conductor. Nor were they likely to do so after hearing the good effects produced in the "Chorus of Sylphs" and elsewhere. Mme. Ella Russell sang in her very best style. Everything went well, and the large audience displayed the customary enthusiasm over the Hungarian March; Mr. Ben Davies was a capital Faust, and Mr. Andrew Black made an excellent Mephistopheles, Mr. Price rendering Brander's song cleverly.

MADAME PATTI'S CONCERT.

ON Saturday, December 4th, Mme. Patti's concert took place at the Albert Hall, there being as usual a very large audience. There is no need for details, one Patti concert being so like another. One satisfaction there was in hearing the prima donna in Mozart's "Voi che sapete." Her brilliancy of execution had ample scope in Rossini's "Bel raggio," and the simple pathos of "Kathleen Mavourneen" displayed her versatility. Mme. Patti joined Mr. Edward Lloyd in the duet from Donizetti's once popular but now forgotten *Don Pasquale*, and was not allowed to quit the platform until she had given "Home, Sweet Home." A number of popular vocalists appeared, and quite a sensation was caused by the violin-playing of Mr. William Henley, of Birmingham, who appears likely to become a celebrity.

DR. GRIEG'S RECITAL.

THE celebrated composer gave his last recital on Wednesday, December 15th, at St. James's Hall. There was an immense demand for seats owing to the rapidly increasing fame and popularity of this delightful musician, and the appearance of Mme. Grieg to sing some of her husband's songs was an additional attraction. Her deeply artistic and sympathetic rendering made a profound impression in his "Im Kahne," "An das Vaterland," etc., no less than the grace and simplicity with which she gave two delightfully quaint children's songs ("Farmyard Song" and "Dobbin's Good-night"), from Op. 61. Dr. Grieg had the assistance of Mr. Johannes Wolff in a sonata, and the composer played a number of his own pieces in exquisite style.

HERR BUCHMAYER'S RECITAL.

HERR RICHARD BUCHMAYER, the excellent Dresden musician, gave an interesting recital at Queen's Hall on Tuesday, December 7th. Herr Buchmayer played examples of the earlier school of clavier and harpsichord music, and contrasted them with specimens of the most modern compositions. Herr Buchmayer gave a second recital on Saturday, December 18th, when a novelty in his programme was a set of variations by Jan Peter Sweelinck, the Dutch composer. A Country Dance, by Dr. John Bull, the unpublished MS. being in the British Museum, was another interesting item, as was one of the Biblical sonatas of Kuhnau. Some pieces by Couperin were also included.

THE GÜRZENICH STRING QUARTET.

THIS party of chamber-music performers from Cologne gave a concert at Queen's Hall, under the leadership of Mr. Willy Hess, and played quartets of Brahms, Schumann, and Beethoven, the "Rasoumowsky" of the latter composer being perhaps their best effort. We have had quartet performers of greater distinction, but earnestness and a good ensemble may be credited to the Cologne party.

LONDON BALLAD CONCERTS.

THESE concerts, which have filled Queen's Hall each time they were given, do not claim to hold an important place in the season's record, but they show signs of progress. The last before Christmas was given on Saturday, December 11th, when Mr. Plunket Greene sang "The Erl King," a melody which popular audiences would not have listened to a few years ago. Miss Clara Butt, Miss Susan Strong, and other well-known vocalists took part, and M. Tivadar Nachez and Mr. Dawson gave violin and pianoforte solos.

STUDENTS' CONCERTS.

THE students of the Royal College, Royal Academy, and Guildhall School had their usual concerts before Christmas. The Royal Academy concert at Queen's Hall served to introduce Dr. Stanford's important Requiem—a work which will, no doubt, extend the fame of the composer, as it contains many lofty ideas, and is written with adequate knowledge of the

highest forms of art. At the Royal College, on December 14th, Mr. Cowen's "Scandinavian Symphony" was performed in the presence of a large audience. The work has been played with success on the Continent, and wherever it is heard a good impression is always made. The Guildhall students, on December 16th, performed Sir Arthur Sullivan's *Golden Legend* at St. James's Hall.

MISCELLANEOUS MUSICAL ITEMS.

MADAME BLANCHE MARCHESI's concert was a success, although she was somewhat out of voice. But her refined art, displayed in four languages, was fully appreciated by the audience.—Mr. Frederick Lamond's feat of playing five Beethoven sonatas in one afternoon, reminds us of the achievements of Dr. von Bülow.—Mr. Newman's Afternoon Orchestral Concerts ended on Saturday, December 11th, with a programme mainly devoted to the works of Wagner.—The last concert of Mr. Fowles' British Chamber-Music series, on December 9th, was chiefly remarkable for a striking and original quintet for clarinet and strings, in F sharp minor, by Mr. Coleridge Taylor. A wonderfully dramatic, much syncopated "Allegro energico" was followed by a short, melodic "Larghetto," chiefly played *con sordini*, a Scherzo, "Allegro leggiero," and a dashing Finale, "Allegro con fuoco," which preserves a well-marked rhythm and great *verve* throughout. The work gained not only enthusiastic applause and a recall for the performers, but persistent demands for the composer.—At the Gompertz Quartet concert of December 1st a capital performance of Dr. Stanford's fine D minor Quartet, and the revival of a quaint work by Dittersdorf, were the chief features; while the concert on December 15th brought to a hearing quartets by Brahms, Dvorák, and Schubert.—We have had a host of private concerts and recitals, few offering anything in the shape of novelty, the selections being generally familiar, and often commonplace.—There has been little to record at the Crystal Palace, where music has had to give place for a time to the Christmas entertainments. But we are promised a good programme of important works in the spring.—The Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Incorporated Society of Musicians is to be held in London (for the first time since 1893), opening on January 3rd with an Evening Reception, and winding up on January 7th with a Banquet—both at the Hôtel Cecil. The subjects of papers to be read on the intervening days are—"The Irish Feis Ceoil," J. Seymour (4th); "The Tonic Basis of all Music," Dr. Sawyer (5th); "Bach's 48 Fugues," Dr. Iliffe; and "Wagner's Musical Expression of Human Emotions as exemplified in *Lohengrin*," George Langley (6th). The Annual Meeting of members takes place on the 7th, at 10.30 a.m.

Musical Notes.

Berlin.—The very remarkable collection of musical autographs in the possession of the Vienna publishers, Artaria & Co., which had been extensively announced for public auction, has passed into the hands of Dr. Erich Priefer. The transfer has taken place in the Royal Library, Berlin.

The Plüddemann Society, counting already forty members since its creation on October 12th last, gives weekly musical evenings for the popularization of the songs and ballads of the recently deceased worthy disciple of Karl Löwe and Richard Wagner—Martin Plüddemann.

From Mozart and Wagner at the Royal Opera to the Frenchified German Jacques Offenbach is a far cry; yet, for good or evil, he has invented a *genre* of his own, and in it he towers far above his successors. An Offenbach cycle progresses merrily at the gorgeous theatre "Unter den Linden," with Fr. Collin and Herr Steiner as highly efficient principal members of the company.

Leipzig.—The celebrated professor of the trumpet, J. Kosleck, who also came to London to assist at the Bach Festivals, celebrated on December 1st his seventy-second birthday. He still conducts, with unimpaired vigour, his Bläserbund (union of wind instruments), numbering over a hundred members, founded in 1888. (See also our special letters from Berlin and Leipzig.)

Dresden.—Another musical veteran—Prof. Carl Reinecke of Leipzig—played his new "Undine" sonata for pianoforte and flute (Herr Beck), Op. 167; his "Ballade," Op. 20; and Schumann's "Am Springbrunnen" (arranged as pianoforte solo), with his usual charm.

The Mozart Society, composed of over a thousand members, gave a concert on behalf of the erection of a Mozart monument here.

Magdeburg.—*Die Kapelle von Roslin*, in one act, by W. von Möllendorf, met with a most favourable reception, free from personal bias, as the composer is a stranger to the town. An orchestral suite in D, by Aug. Klughardt, Hofkapellmeister of Dessau, was also performed for the first time.

Stettin.—The monument to the great ballad-composer, Karl Löwe, was unveiled on November 30th (the 101st anniversary of his birth). His choral works, "Salvem fac Regem" and "Oitium divos" produced a deep impression. A new symphonic poem, in five parts—"Die Jungfrau von Orleans," by the local Dr. Ad. Lorenz—presents a happy blending of the classical with modern realism. Fr. Meta Geyer and Herr Hildach did well in the chief vocal parts.

Hamburg.—Bungert's music-drama, *Heimkehr des Odysseus*, achieved a striking success.

Theodor Loewe, director of the Breslau Theatre, has accepted the management of the theatres of Hamburg and Altona as successor to the late B. Pollini.

Cassel.—Successful first performances were given of the one-act *Winapoh*, by the local M. Lion, and of the three-act comic opera, *Das hölzerne Schwert*, by Zöllner. Who would have imagined that scholastic Louis Spohr, who decried Beethoven's last works, should turn out a forerunner of Richard Wagner! The projected production of his posthumous music-drama, *Der Kreuzritter*, is anticipated with considerable curiosity.

Stuttgart.—A small monument has been erected in the Augusta Strasse in honour of Anton Rubinstein, who stayed there in 1856. A musical "Rubinstein Festival" took place in the evening.

Düsseldorf.—Smetana's heroic opera, *Dalibor*, met with a sympathetic reception.

Frankfort a/m.—The last four concerts of the "Museum" Society brought forward a long list of absolute and quasi novelties, including Richard Strauss's "Tod und Verklärung," "Till Eulenspiegel," and Vincent d'Indy's "Wallenstein" Trilogy—the last-named piece being conducted by the composer in person. Much of the applause which followed must, no doubt, be credited to this circumstance, and to the fine performance of the band, under the direction of Kapellmeister Kogel, as regards the other works.

Darmstadt and **Homburg** successfully produced E. O. Nodnagel's "Symbolie" for orchestra, after Grimm's fairy tale, "The Brave Little Tailor."

Mayence.—Conspicuous success attended a revival of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, under Fritz Volbach's masterly conductorship.

Weimar.—Stavenhagen's resignation has been accepted on his own account as conductor, as well as on behalf of his wife, dramatic vocalist.

Vienna.—Tschaikowsky's *Eugen Onegin* (made known to London some years ago by Señor Lago at the Olympic Theatre) was received with enthusiasm at the Imperial

Opera. How much of this was due to Slav patriotism is another question. The lyric portion contains pleasing matter, but dramatic grip is conspicuous by its absence. The Russian master ranks far higher as symphonist than as operatic composer. The performance with Fr. Renard, Herrn Schröder and Ritter, was first-rate under Gustav Mahler's baton. This gentleman, in his new capacity as director of the opera, after (very properly) putting his foot on the "claque," ordered the doors to be closed during the performance. Habitués protest, and point out that in the case of the *Rhinegold* (which is played without a break) they could not enter the house at all! Another novelty was Dvorák's cantata, "St. Ludmilla." Notwithstanding numerous cuts, the work (most carefully prepared by R. von Perger) obtained—apart from obvious Czechian demonstrations—a bare *succès d'estime*.

The Josefstadt Theatre, for which Beethoven wrote his overture "Die Weihe des Hauses," and where *Lohengrin* had its *première* in Vienna, but which had sunk to low French farce, has mended its ways, *Der Freischütz*, *La Dame Blanche*, etc., drawing delighted audiences.

"Popular" Concerts have, from various causes, never become popular in Vienna. But the "Neues Symphonie-Orchester" under Herr Zinner's direction bids fair to prove an exception to the rule.

The Rosé Quartet produced César Franck's almost-forgotten pianoforte trio Op. 1 with doubtful success, but the Hellmesberger Quartet made a hit with Robert Fuchs's new "Phantasiestücke" for violin, viola and piano, a rare and most useful combination. They belong to the graceful composer's best works, and are sure to command general approval. A genuine sensation was caused by the boy violinist, Max Wolfthal, aged 15, pupil of J. M. Grün, with such trifles as Mendelssohn's and Brahms' concertos!

Prof. Prill, the new leader of the Imperial Opera, has formed a Quartet association. Vienna stands pre-eminent in this class of musical association, as may be expected from the most musical city in the world.

The baritone, Van Rooy, of Bayreuth-Berlin-London reputation, gave a song recital. His success was a foregone conclusion.

The waltz-king, Johann Strauss, conducted a performance by the orchestra of his brother Eduard, of an unpublished set of waltzes, "On the shores of the Elbe," which, without equaling his immortal "Blue Danube," is full of charm and *entrain*, and was encored with enthusiasm.

The pianoforte-maker, L. Bösendorfer, has, "in grateful remembrance of Dr. Hans von Bülow," who opened his concert-room twenty-five years ago, very generously offered a prize of 4,000 crowns, divided into three prizes of 2,000, 1,200, and 800, for a pianoforte concerto with orchestra. The scores are to be sent in prior to 1st July, 1898. The jury is composed of Herren Epstein, Gericke, Grünfeld, Leschetitzky, and Moritz Rosenthal.

The remains of the famous violinist-composer, Joseph Mayseder (died 1863) will be transferred to the mausoleum of musical heroes, the Central Cemetery.

Gratz.—*Enoch Arden*, by Rudolph Raimann, was successfully given for the first time. This is the fourth German opera set to Tennyson's popular poem.

Budapest.—The *première* of Leoncavallo's *Bohème* resulted in thirty-two recalls for the composer! The house was sold out to the fourth performance.

Paris.—Every token of success attended the production of Massenet's *Sapho* at the Opéra Comique, a large, perhaps the largest, measure of the applause being unquestionably due to Madame Calvè's magnificent impersonation.

Independent critics rank the work considerably below *Manon* and *Werther*. The composer presented the distinguished vocalist with the MS. score, and wrote a letter of warm acknowledgment to his "bon et grand ami" the conductor, M. Danbé. *La Carmagnole*, a new opéra-comique by Paul Fauchey, was given at the Folies Dramatiques.

The juxtaposition of the two *Faust* overtures by Schumann and Wagner respectively, at the Concerts Colonne, was a happy thought. At the same concerts, Richard Strauss had a *succès de curiosité* with his "Tod und Verklärung" and "Till Eulenspiegel," which he conducted in person, but genuine applause followed the delivery of some of his songs by his wife, Strauss de Ahna. Henri Marteau's production of Th. Dubois's new violin concerto elicited three recalls. Colonne's new series of matinées are full of interest. Works by Orlando di Lasso, Mozart, Rameau, and Saint-Saëns's fine septet for piano, trumpet, and strings (played by the entire band), supplied the chief items of a recent concert.

The Lamoureux Concerts are now conducted with much talent by the distinguished chef's son-in-law, M. Chevillard. With the exception of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* overture, and a pretty trifle, *L'enterrement d'Ophélie*, by Bourgault-Ducoudray, the programmes so far kept well within familiar lines. Démér played Saint-Saëns' comparative new original Pianoforte Concerto, No. 5, with his well-known finish.

The famous organist, Alex. Guilmant, has left for a series of (at least!) seventy-five concerts. The celebrated vocalist, Miss Sibyl Sanderson, was married to the Cuban "richard," Mr. Antonio Terry. Being a Protestant, she had to embrace the Roman Catholic religion.

Brussels.—The first French production of *Die Meistersinger* took place at the Monnaie in 1885 with extraordinary éclat. It was revived in 1888 with diminished favour. It has now been reproduced with its initial success, owing also to one of the finest Wagnerian interpretations ever witnessed on that famous stage, MM. Séguin (Hans Sachs) and Soulacroix (Beckmesser) earning special distinction. The ubiquitous Richard Strauss conducted his "Till Eulenspiegel" and "Thus spake Zarathustra" symphonies, but the chief success was, as elsewhere, reserved for his "Lieder," sung by his gifted wife.

Milan.—The first symphonic concert directed by Leandro Campanari at La Scala brought forward a Symphony in E minor by Alberto Franchetti, Moritz Moszkowski's first Suite, Max Bruch's *Loreley* Prelude, and Massenet's *Phèdre* Overture. The closing of this famous theatre, owing to the withdrawal of the Government subvention, has given rise to several projects, which are now under consideration.

Genoa.—The much-talked-of première of A. Franchetti's new opera, *Signore di Pourceaugnac*, met with only partial success.

Venice.—The new opera, *Nemea*, by the Neapolitan composer, Ernesto Coop, is pleasingly written, but without adequate dramatic force. A love-duet was pronounced the gem of the work.

Bergamo.—Mascagni is putting the finishing touch to his opera *Iris*, at which he has been at work for about two years.

St. Petersburg.—A monument has been erected in the cemetery in memory of Peter Tschaikowsky, who died in this city four years ago.

The Wagner performances in which the brothers de Reszé are to take part, will be given next March. Dr. Löwe is bringing his full orchestra and chorus from Breslau for the occasion.

Moscow.—The Philharmonic Concerts, which had gained considerable distinction last year, were opened under the conductorship of Gustav F. Kogel. Tschaikowsky's *Manfred* symphony was included in the performance.

Geneva.—A new opera, *Sancho Panza*, by E. Jaques-Dalcroze (born in Vienna in 1865), whose "Poème Alpestre" and other works created a most favourable impression at St. James's Hall last summer, has been accepted for performance at the excellent Town Theatre.

Madrid.—Mancinelli's opera, *Hero and Leander* (heard in cantata form at an English provincial festival and "underlined" at Covent Garden, but not given), met with brilliant success. The genial and gifted composer had to appear thirty times (without responsibility for the exact figure!) before the footlights.

Athens.—The theatres, which had been closed owing to the war, were reopened with benefit performances on behalf of the victims of that sad calamity.

Leeds.—It is now settled that Sir Arthur Sullivan is to conduct this year's Festival and to furnish a new secular cantata; that Humperdinck is to write (and conduct) a symphonic poem for it (of which the subject was suggested by a visit to Tangier), and that Villiers Stanford's Latin *Te Deum* in commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee, composed expressly for the Leeds Festival, is to be performed. No decision is yet arrived at as to altering the pitch of the town organ.

Liverpool.—The civic authorities have not seen fit to grant any pension to the widow of their late eminent organist, Mr. W. T. Best. This is a matter for considerable surprise, having regard to the long and valuable services of the latter, the wealth of the city, and Mrs. Best's reduced circumstances. It is to be hoped some adequate provision may yet be made.

Manchester.—A bust of Sir Charles Hallé, executed in marble by Mr. Onslow Ford, was formally presented to the city on December 9th last, by Sir W. Houldsworth, M.P. The subscriptions amounted to £1 63s., and the surplus is to be devoted to founding a piano scholarship—value £30 a year—at the Manchester Royal College of Music.

DEATHS.—Bernhard Pollini (really Pohl), the famous Impresario of the Opera and several theatres at Hamburg and Altona, died suddenly November 26th, 1897. He was born December 12th, 1836, in Cologne. Only a few months ago he married the celebrated *prima donna* Frl. Bianca Bianchi (*née* Schwarz), against whom he had been engaged in a theatrical lawsuit a short time previous.

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